

## **SECURITY TIPS FOR JUDGES AND THEIR FAMILIES AWAY FROM THE COURTHOUSE\***

*Security Definition: The state of being or feeling secure; freedom from fear; something that gives or assures safety.*

### **Travel and Vehicle Techniques**

1. Vary your travel routes and times, *i.e.* shopping, visits to school, going to and from work.
2. If you do not have secured parking, vary your routine and location of parking frequently. Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
3. Always walk with car keys in hand.
4. Visually check the interior of your vehicle before getting in. Be aware of occupied vehicles parked close by. If possible, use the buddy system when walking to parking areas.
5. Keep your name or title off assigned parking spaces at work.
6. Avoid going alone to events or on trips whenever possible.
7. Avoid personalized license plates.
8. Do not use business cards as luggage tags.
9. When involved in a minor vehicle accidents, use your cell phone to call law enforcement, but do not identify yourself as a judge or judge's family member. Never go into a stranger's home unless as a safe haven if you are threatened.
10. Request that the driver of the other vehicle follow you to a well-lit or busy area to exchange pertinent information.
11. When out of town for a long period of time, arrange to have your vehicle(s) moved to a different location.
12. Letting your local law enforcement know when you and your family are out of town.
13. Leave your full itinerary and contact numbers with your office, family members, and administrative offices.

### **Home Security**

1. Use an intercom system to answer the door. If a litigant or other member of the public appears at your door, explain that the judge in your household can meet with them only at the office only during regular office hours.
2. Do not use your name on your mailbox, lamppost or house.
3. Consider installing a monitored home-alarm system that is equipped with a handheld panic alarm system.
4. Sit down with family members frequently to discuss issues and how they would respond to them. Discuss natural disasters, unwanted visits, suspected prowlers, and annoying phone calls. In most instances, these discussions will make spouses and children feel much better, and they will be better prepared for these events.

5. When going out of town, arrange to have your mail and newspapers removed and collected.

## **Campaigns**

1. If possible, arrange for personal security at parades and dinners.
2. Take a companion or associate with you if you do door-to-door campaigning.
3. Appear at campaign fundraising events only when security has been arranged.
4. Do not personally post or remove campaign signs, *i.e.* have someone else do this for you.
5. Do not post campaign signs at your own residence, *i.e.* do not advertise where you live. Do not put bumper stickers on your personal vehicle(s).

## **Personal Security**

1. Use a generic e-mail address (Yahoo) when ordering personal items or travel on the internet. A generic e-mail address reduces the risk of your e-mail address being sold to other vendors and swamping you with spam at your official site and it may also reduce the risk of receiving unwanted communications from the public.
2. Report any level of threat to your security provider (Sheriff) and to the Administrative Office of the Courts regional office or the Emergency Response and Security Unit in San Francisco. Simple threats such as unwanted communication to more serious threats against your person, or the court system in general, should be reported.

\*Excerpted from the National Center for State Courts Judicial Family Institute at <http://jfi.ncsconline.org/outsec6.html>.

## **Resources**

<http://www.ncsconline.org/WC/Education/CtSecuGuide.htm>